

In the Claims

1 1. [Currently Amended] A method of forming a head assembly
2 comprising:
3 providing a base member;
4 forming a plurality of head components upon the base member
5 individually adapted to communicate information relative to media;
6 providing a plurality of component regions between respective ones of the
7 head components and a path of travel of the media; ~~and~~
8 providing a support region intermediate adjacent ones of the head
9 components and positioned to support the media moving along the path of
10 travel, the support region comprising a material different than a material of the
11 component regions; and
12 providing an insulating layer and wherein the providing the support region
13 comprises removing portions of the insulating layer to form the support region.

1 2. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 providing the support region comprises providing the support region comprising a
3 material having a hardness greater than a material of the component regions.

1 3. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 providing the support region comprises providing the support region comprising a
3 material having a greater resistance to wear than a material of the component
4 regions.

1 4. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 forming comprises forming the head components to individually comprise a read
3 element and a write element.

1 5. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 forming comprises forming the head components to communicate using Linear
3 Tape Open technology.

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1 6. Cancel.

1 7. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 providing the support region comprises forming the support region upon a cover
3 member and placing the cover member adjacent the base member.

1 8. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 7 wherein the
2 forming the support region upon the cover member comprises removing portions
3 of the cover member.

1 9. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 providing the support region comprises depositing support region material over
3 the base member.

1 10. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 providing the base member comprises providing a wafer substrate.

1 11. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 forming comprises forming head components individually configured to
3 communicate digital information relative to the media comprising a magnetic
4 tape.

Claims 12-20 are canceled.

1 21. [Previously Presented] The method in accordance with claim 1
2 wherein the providing the component regions comprises providing the
3 component regions immediately adjacent to the media moving along the path of
4 travel.

1 22. [Previously Presented] The method in accordance with claim 1
2 wherein the providing the component regions comprises positioning the
3 component regions to contact the media moving along the path of travel.

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1 23. Cancel.

1 24. [Previously Presented] A method of forming a head assembly
2 comprising:
3 providing a base member;
4 forming a plurality of head components upon the base member
5 individually adapted to communicate information relative to media;
6 providing a plurality of component regions adjacent respective ones of the
7 head components and a path of travel of the media;
8 providing a support region intermediate adjacent ones of the head
9 components and positioned to support the media moving along the path of
10 travel, the support region comprising a material different than a material of the
11 component regions; and
12 providing an insulating layer, and wherein the providing the support region
13 comprises removing portions of the insulating layer to form the support region.

1 25. [New] A method of forming a head assembly comprising:
2 providing a base member;
3 forming a plurality of head components upon the base member
4 individually adapted to communicate information relative to media;
5 providing a plurality of component regions between respective ones of the
6 head components and a path of travel of the media;
7 providing a support region intermediate adjacent ones of the head
8 components and positioned to support the media moving along the path of
9 travel, the support region comprising a material different than a material of the
10 component regions;
11 wherein the providing the support region comprises forming the support
12 region upon a cover member and placing the cover member adjacent the base
13 member; and
14 wherein the forming the support region upon the cover member comprises
15 removing portions of the cover member.

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